THE YOUNG REFUGEE

By ANNE BEALE

DISS

Baptist Sunday School.

AWARDED TO

Elizabeth Haxell

FOR ATTENDANCE AND CONDUCT IN THE ABOVE SCHOOL DURING THE YEAR 1883.

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January, 1884.

16

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MARIE AND HER GUIDE. [*Page* 20.

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ANNE BEALE.

London:
THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY,
56, PATERNOSTER ROW; 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD;
AND 164, PICCADILLY.

Butler & Tanner, The Selwood Printing Works, Frome, and London.

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THE YOUNG REFUGEE.

CHAPTER I.

FROM LONDON BRIDGE TO SOHO.

"SOHO! Soho! De grâce, montrez-moi Soho!" ("Be so kind as to direct me to Soho!")

Such were the entreating words of a young girl who had just landed at London Bridge from France, in the autumn of the year 1870. She knew no one, she could not speak English, and she was literally alone in London. It was the time of the Franco-German war, and crowds of refugees were continually inundating the English ports, so a foreigner more or less attracted little attention. Her name was Marie Altmann; she

was about thirteen years of age, and she had found her way from France to England in search of her parents, who had, she believed, fled from Paris for their lives, while she was in a boarding-school in the provinces.

Young, pretty, a foreigner, and alone on London Bridge! Happily, she did not realize what this meant; she only knew that she was in free and happy England, whither, she had been told, her parents had gone before her, and she had no doubt of finding them. Still, as she stood on the huge bridge amongst the ever-shifting, jostling, selfish crowds that passed her by at every second, she could but feel bewildered and alarmed; and when she found that her password "Soho! Soho!" was unheeded, and she herself only a unit in the multitudes around her, her brave heart naturally sank. Her father was of German parentage, though he had lived in Paris from infancy (one of the "fils des étrangers," as they were called); her mother was a Frenchwoman; she was, herself, altogether French, born and bred in Paris, so she scarcely understood why her parents should have been compelled to leave what they looked upon as their native country.

But she had been informed by her governess that all the Germans had received notice to quit Paris or risk the consequences, and that her parents had left for England. So she had escaped from school,

in the general panic, to follow them. She had heard and read that the French congregated in Soho, and her one idea was, that she should find them there; and this was why she repeated the word to the busy, hasting, pre-occupied throngs that hustled her as they passed her by unheeded.

She was sick and giddy from the effects of her voyage and long abstinence, and as she gazed at the scene before her, she felt as if she must fall. She crept along the parapet to one of the abutments, and seated herself on the stone bench that surrounded it. Curled up in one corner, she tried to reflect on what she had so rashly done, and what she was now to do. But she found reflection almost impossible, for, in spite of her trouble, her eyes followed the incessant stream of monster vans, waggons, carts, barrows, cabs and horses that poured in monotonous succession over the broad causeway; and the influx and reflux of the thousands of foot-passengers that appeared to rush past her like torrents. Then beneath and around her were the Thames and London, of which she knew nothing, but that the one was the chief river, the other the capital city of England. She gazed from the forests of masts to the wilderness of houses, and her young heart sank within her.

"Why did I leave my pensionnat?" she thought. "But every one was in terror. Yet mamma is

French, and why did she flee? Perhaps she still remains in Paris. Perhaps she waits for me. What if papa was taken prisoner? Oh! the cruel war! the cruel war! Soho! monsieur, Soho!"

These last words were addressed to a young man who had seated himself near her, and put some questions to her in English. She glanced at him from beneath her pretty hat, and either her words or the half-frightened, half-naïve expression of her dark eyes, made him smile.

"Soho is miles away," he said, pointing towards the city. "Come with me, and I will take you there."

Fortunately she did not understand his words, and his sinister looks displeased her. She got up and hurried from the place.

"Where are you going so fast?" were the next words that greeted her, while she was arrested by a hand on her shoulder.

"Soho, monsieur!" she cried, and found that her interlocutor was a policeman.

She had a child's terror of the police, and strove to escape; but he held her fast. He took her for one of the juvenile pickpockets to be found in most great London thoroughfares. He had, indeed, been watching her, and seeing her pursued, had stopped her.

"What have you in your hand and bag?" he

ON LONDON BRIDGE.

asked severely, but not understanding him, she could not reply.

She spoke to him, however, rapidly in French, and he led her over the bridge through the crowds to a comparatively quiet spot at the entrance. Here he touched her clasped hand, and she opened it in terror, for it contained a franc, the only money she now possessed. She had spent all she had besides in her railway and steam-packet tickets. The young man who had spoken to her had disappeared, and the policeman knew that his suspicions were unfounded, so he bethought himself of what to do with Marie.

There are no kinder men living than the London police, abuse them as we may, and he heartily pitied the young foreigner whose language he did not understand. But he dared not go off his beat, so he beckoned to another policeman, who joined him.

Meanwhile, the terrified child stood trembling before them, now, with eloquent tongue and natural action pouring forth her story, in which her password often occurred, anon, in frightened quietude, wondering if they would carry her to prison.

"They said these English gave the strangers welcoming, but, oh, they are hard—hard!" she thought. "Have they thus received my dear papa, my tender mamma?"

While she was thus meditating, she was handed

over to the second policeman, upon which she was overcome with fear. She fell on her knees, clasped her hands, and uttered a passionate remonstrance in French.

He took her gently but firmly by the arm, raised her, and led her, trembling, up crowded King William Street, to a shop on the right of the colossal statue of that monarch. Pointing to the window, he showed her the words in large letters, "Ici l'on parle français" ("Here they speak French"), at sight of which she nearly clasped him in her arms with delight, exclaiming, in French, "Now I shall find them. Now they will direct me to Soho. A thousand thanks, monsieur; a thousand thanks."

Still holding her by the arm, the imperturbable policeman took her into the shop, which happened to be a draper's, in which a small army of young women seemed, to Marie's anxious eyes, to be busily engaged.

"You speak French here, sir," said the policeman to the very gracious and polite shop-walker. "Here is a French girl; just landed, I should think. I can make nothing of her. Will you let her speak to somebody who can understand her?"

"Our young French lady's whole time is taken up talking to the refugees," replied the puzzled man, glancing at Marie's tearful, large, black eyes. "London will be fuller than ever of foreigners

eating us out of house and home; and there are already Germans and French enough to people Paris and Hamburg. Why can't they stop at home and eat one another?"

"Can't say, sir. I wish they would," returned the policeman. "We don't know what to do with 'em. But we mustn't let 'em stop up the thoroughfares; and they don't know what we mean when we tell 'em to 'move on.'"

While this was passing, Marie was casting appealing glances from one to the other, her lips, usually apart for laughter and chatter, were firmly closed, as if she knew that speech was vain; and her generally rosy cheeks were white with anxiety. Seeing the shop-walker go down the long shop and disappear, she clung to the policeman, who patted her shoulder encouragingly, and said to the young men and women as well as the customers, who were looking on inquiringly, "All right. Only a foreigner."

"A votre service, mademoiselle," suddenly fell on Marie's ear, as she hung her head and drooped her eyes beneath so many strange faces.

The words were magical. She started, and looked up. A young girl, only a few years her senior, stood before her. She was dressed in black, and her dark hair was thrown off her pale face in the easy fashion of her countrywomen.

"You are French!" cried Marie, and threw her-

self into the arms of one, who though personally a stranger, was yet a compatriot.

The scene was so affecting that the kind-hearted spectators were moved. However, business must go on, even if death be in its midst, and a young man from behind a desk came forward and said so in a few words of incomprehensible French. At the same time he beckoned the policeman and the two girls into an office at the back of the said desk, where they were unobserved.

Here Marie told her tale, and entreated to be taken to Soho, where she knew her parents were. Her new friend spoke about as much English as the young clerk French; but they managed to make the policeman understand between them.

"My mother and my grandmother, and our dear Lisette, they lodge in Soho, and I return there after eight. Our name is Le Beau. We are many months in England. I am Adèle Le Beau, and am only just placed here," said the young shop-girl rapidly to Marie. "We die of hunger ourselves, sometimes, but we help our compatriots; and the good English help and shelter us all—God bless them! There are yet three hours before I leave this, or you could accompany me to Soho."

"Tell them to direct me there, and I shall find my way," said Marie, enthusiastically. "I have no fear if I can reach Soho."

"I will put her in the way," said the young clerk from his desk, whence his attention was attracted from the voluminous ledger and lines of figures before him, to what was passing behind.

"Then I give her our address," returned Adèle. Then to Marie: "Monsieur will point the way; my mother will help you to find your parents——"

"Mamselle Le Beau! Mamselle wanted at once," came from the shop.

"At the instant. Here, monsieur," cried Adèle, who lived in constant dread of not being able to keep her situation.

"Tell me the address. I will write it," said the clerk.

"Numéro 3, Danémark Street, Soho," replied Adèle. "Tell my mother that I sent you," she continued to Marie. "I would keep you here, but we incommode the customers. Three, Danémark Street, Soho." Then the two girls embraced as if they had been long acquainted, and Adèle hurried back to her work.

Both the policeman and clerk imagined that Marie had found an old friend, and felt satisfied about her. The latter wrote, in fine, round, clerkly hand, as follows: "Madame Le Beau, 3, Denmark Street, Soho. Allé par Mansion House, Poultry, Cheapside, Newgate Street, Holborn, Oxford Street, Soho Square; draw"—by which last word he meant "droit" (straight).

If the worthy clerk, nephew of the head of the house, spoke French ill, he wrote it worse, and when he put his directions into Marie's hands, she was as much bewildered as ever. But her elastic nature was at rebound, and she uttered a hundred thanks in a breath, curtseyed to her new friends, and was about to hasten away, when the policeman once more detained her.

"I will see her past the Mansion House," he said. "Tell her to ask her way of the police."

"Demandez—ha—demandez le way, des pollisses hommes," stammered the clerk.

"He bids me avoid the pollissons (rogues)," thought Marie, and vehemently promised so to do.

"Give her something to eat," continued the clerk to the policeman, offering sixpence.

"Give her the money yourself, sir," was the reply; and Marie again uttered thanks for what she considered half a franc.

Then the policeman led her quickly through the shop, followed by the wondering glances of all its inmates, and hurried her on until they reached a pastrycook's. Here he bade the waitress give her a bun, and Marie exchanged her silver for pence which she did not understand; after which she was taken, bun in hand, safely across the crowded thoroughfares round about the Mansion House, and finally landed in Cheapside. Astonished at all she

saw, so different from Paris, her thoughts were withdrawn from herself to her surroundings, and she found herself wondering that there were so many people in the whole world as she had seen since she landed at London Bridge. She was recalled to her position by being brought to a standstill, and having her paper of directions taken from her hand by the policeman. He showed her the word "Holborn," pointed forward, returned her the paper, and left her. She was again alone. "But I know where to go," she thought, putting the untasted bun into her bag, and the pence into her pocket, and walking steadily onwards.

By the time she reached the terrible walls of the prison at the end of Newgate Street, it was beginning to grow dusk, and she was uncertain about the wide crossing at that point. But she had acquired confidence in the power of the police, so she boldly held her paper before one of those stalwart sons of Janus, and he conducted her over the crossing.

"Pass the Viaduct yonder; up Holborn and Oxford Street. Ask again for Soho Square," he said, pointing straight on. Marie shook her head, but her mute language was unavailing, for he was gone. She followed the direction of his finger, however, and managed to cross the Viaduct; but Holborn Circus, with its divergent streets, puzzled her again. As she was gazing about her, a creature

such as she had never seen, stood before her, bowing and gesticulating, and pointing to the opposite side, with the words, "Take you across, my lady." It was a small, unkempt, barefooted imp of a juvenile crossing-sweeper, who held a broom in one hand and a lock of straggling hair in the other. Marie could not help laughing at his gestures and queer little face, which caused him to throw a somersault for her amusement, and then, with a broad grin, and a "Give us a copper, miss," to make a backward movement towards the opposite side. "Soho! Soho!" cried Marie.

"Take you there for—let's see—one, two, three pence," he replied, meditatively, checking off the numbers on three of his fingers as he spoke, then pointing his right thumb over his left shoulder with a knowing wink.

Marie had stepped off the pavement in her eagerness to understand him, just as a number of vehicles were rounding the corner, and were compelled to pull up suddenly on account of a block somewhere or other. She missed her footing, and would have fallen, and probably been in danger from the wheels, but for the timely aid of the city arab who was about to conduct her to Soho.

"Take care! Take care!" he exclaimed, narrowly escaping himself, and dragging Marie back to the pavement. "Now I shall charge a tanner for Soho."

He held out one hand to her, and pointing with his broom in the direction of the central lamp-post, gave a cunning wink, as much as to say that he knew all about it. She, hearing her password, put her hand confidingly in his black little palm, and gave herself up to his guidance. But her terror was great, as he dodged in and out of the block of omnibuses, cabs, and waggons, until he landed in the centre of Holborn Circus; and it increased when the vehicles began to move, and he signed to her, with marvellous gestures, to follow him through the mass. She was courageous and quick, however, and obeyed, not considering that where such an eel could glide, she could not. Had not a cabman pulled up short, with something like an oath at the boy, she would have been run over; and as it was, she barely escaped, and that thanks to the self-confidence of her conductor.

"Swear away, guv'ner. She don't hear. She's deaf and dumb," he cried, which caused another cab to pull up, and Marie escaped. "They all stops for the p'lice and me," he added with a grin, and preceded the girl up Holborn.

As his bare feet pattered over the pavement, she had scarcely strength to follow. Now she would lose sight of him among the crowds; anon he would reappear, holding up his broom as if it were a signal-post. The lamps were alight before they

got into Oxford Street. Still Marie had perfect faith in the boy, for, in spite of his odd ways, his face looked honest.

It was late when they reached the turning into Soho Square, and she was well nigh exhausted by the rapid walk and long fasting. But he led her triumphantly into the square, and, stopping underneath the first lamp-post, pointed with his broom to the words "Soho Square," on the direction board at the corner, and held out his hand for his reward, with a grimace and pull of the forelock. She seized the thin, dirty hand in her gratitude, and kissed it, which caused him no small wonder and amusement. Then she emptied her pocket of the fivepence, and took the bun from her bag, wisely retaining her franc. He counted the money, accepted the bun, and threw another somersault there beneath the lamplight.

"Rue Danémark?" said Marie questioningly.

"Never heard o' the genleman. Better ask in a shop," replied the boy, and disappeared, leaving Marie once more alone.

"I am in Soho! I shall find my parents. I shall meet Adèle again," she thought, as she glanced round the quiet darksome square.

With the solemnity of night, and the comparative repose, came the recollection of One whom she had forgotten in the light and bustle of the day.

"I have not said my prayers. The good God will be angry with me," she reflected, for her ideas of the Supreme Being and of prayer were confused.

She repeated rapidly such few prayers as she had learnt, then found herself wondering whether they would be effectual in England when said in a foreign tongue. Her notions of religion were but crude; still, as she looked upwards, and saw the moon right above her head, she suddenly received enlightenment, and said within herself,—

"The good God and His dear Son are everywhere. Bring me to my parents, O my Lord."

This was, perhaps, the first spontaneous prayer she had ever uttered, and it seemed to give her strength and faith in a guidance unseen but sure.

Some one stopped near her who took out his watch to ascertain the hour by the lamplight. She glanced up and saw a gentleman whose face looked kindly, and she said to herself, "Perhaps the good God has sent him to me as soon as I asked."

"Rue Danémark, monsieur," she exclaimed, holding the clerk's direction paper up beneath the watch.

He read it, and spoke to her in French. Although his French was easy and fluent, she perceived at once that he was not her countryman; still, she was thankful to be understood. She asked him to direct her to the address written on the paper, and in doing so she burst into tears. Her strength

was, indeed, nearly spent, and the sound of the familiar language caused her to break down.

"Follow me, my child, and I will conduct you to Denmark Street," he said in French. "But you must make haste, for I have an appointment."

She summoned her scant remaining powers, and walked by the stranger's side through several dark, dreary, and, it seemed to her, poor streets and courts. He asked her history, meanwhile, but she had no longer strength to tell it. She was, besides, frightened at the dreariness and loneliness of the district.

"Have no fear, my child," he said, taking her hand. "I know Madame Le Beau, and we shall soon be with her. Put your trust in your Father in heaven; He knows your grief, whatever it is, and will be your guardian and guide if you ask Him."

These words seemed to reassure Marie, though they redoubled her tears. She could not speak, and they walked on in silence.

They reached Denmark Street at last; a retired, desolate-looking corner of mighty London, that might have been some village court for all the life there was there.

"Here we are; follow me upstairs," said the stranger, opening the front door and entering without knocking.

Marie hesitated, for she felt doubtful for the

first time of submitting thus to the guidance of a stranger; and, indeed, the wisdom of such submission was more than doubtful, in such a huge wilderness as London, where, "If good abounds, evil doth much more abound." Besides, the stranger had not, like the crossing-sweeper, shown her the name of the street as they entered it. He seemed to understand her hesitation, smiled, and left her for a moment in the passage, which was quite dark but for the gleam of lamplight that crept in. She heard him pause on the first landing, knock at a door, and say cheerfully in French, "I have brought you a friend, Madame Le Beau."

"Ah; but it is you, monsieur. But enter. Excuse us, for we are in deshabille. We wash," sounded in Marie's bewildered ears in a language that she not only recognised as her own, but spoken by a Frenchwoman.

Either the previous fatigue or the present joy overpowered her, and staggering towards the uncarpeted staircase, she fell upon the steps, and fainted.

And thus she was found by her guide and a woman who followed him downstairs bearing a candle. They raised her, and saw by the white face that she was insensible.

"I do not know her. I never saw her before," said Madame Le Beau, holding the light before the closed eyes.

"Another refugee from the war. Poor child! we must do what we can for her. Our blessed Lord came to seek and to save the lost. We must follow His example. You cannot turn her adrift," replied the gentleman, picking up Marie's paper of directions that had fallen from her hands.

"But no, certainly. Still, we have nothing; and Adèle is only just placed, and I have only two lessons of music the week. Ah! but she is pretty, the poor child. Bring her up, monsieur."

The gentleman took Marie in his arms, and carried her upstairs into what, at first sight, appeared to be an empty room. But it was not quite empty, for an old woman was standing by an elbow-chair that she had vacated, near a grate in which was a handful of embers, on which a saucepan made believe to boil.

"She will recover quicker on the floor—a thousand thanks, madame," said the gentleman, rejecting the offered chair. "A little water, Madame Le Beau."

He had laid Marie down on the driest spot he could find, for some sort of wash had been in progress, the result of which was that there were two washhand basins full of soap-suds on the boards, and a variety of damp garments hung on cords across the room. He administered the water, while Madame Le Beau unfastened Marie's hat-strings, and the old woman began to stir the pot-au-feu.

The latter was Madame Le Beau's mother, and she soon ladled from her saucepan into an empty jam-pot some of its simmering contents.

"She is cold and hungry; this will be better than water," said the old woman, passing her soupe maigre.

So it was; for the strong and possibly familiar taste and smell of garlic revived Marie. She opened her eyes, and glanced in bewildered astonishment round the room, and lastly on its tenants. Four bare walls; clothes on lines; Madame Le Beau in a loose print dressing-gown, with a kind, handsome face, and dishevelled, wavy black hair; the aged mother with her head enveloped and bound with kerchiefs, a wooden spoon in her hand; and the good gentleman who had brought her there.

"She recovers. Thank God!" cried Madame Le Beau.

At this moment something stirred in the farthest corner of the room, and Marie's eyes were riveted in sudden terror on some creature that jumped with one bound to the door, stood on its hind legs, and began, so it seemed, to dance. It had an enormous tail, and was magnified before her dazed vision into some abnormal creature.

"Ha! but it is our Adèle. Lisette hears her step before us, because we are occupied," exclaimed the grandmother, hastening to the door.

"Lisette! You have still your cat?" said the gentleman.

"But yes! She is our second child. We would not part with her for a thousand pounds," returned Madame Le Beau.

"Lisette, ma petite amie, ma chérie!" sounded on Marie's ear, and in another moment Adèle appeared. "But must thou always have the first greeting? and wilt thou ever dance?" she added, taking the paws of Marie's bête noire, which was a tortoise-shell Angora cat, and waltzing with it into the room. "A thousand pardons, monsieur. But what is it? Ah, my child; thou hast found us! We feared, Monsieur Merric and I, thou wouldst be lost."

"Adèle! Is it thou? Adèle!" whispered Marie, and rising with a great effort, she once more threw her arms round her young countrywoman, who embraced and supported her, while the mother and grandmother shed tears, and the gentleman crept away to keep his long-delayed appointment, pronouncing, in French, as he departed, the beautiful text, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy-laden, and I will give you rest."

CHAPTER II.

MARIE'S PARENTS.

WHEN Marie had swallowed the best part of the soup, and eaten with it a crust of very dry bread, she revived, and was ready and able to answer all the questions put to her by Madame Le Beau, and to recount her history.

"Hein! Thou art the daughter of Monsieur Altmann, the great jeweller of the Faubourg St. Honoré!" exclaimed Madame Le Beau. "But I bought these ear-rings at thy father's shop, and oh! I desired to be rich, to purchase many of the magnificent ornaments I saw. He was worth his thousands, I wager, and now he is as poor as we are."

Madame Le Beau touched a handsome gold earring with her finger as she spoke, and Marie looked

at it eagerly. Madame Mercier, the grandmother, had re-seated herself in the elbow-chair, and Adèle had drawn forward, as seats, a box for her mother, and an empty mignonette box for Marie and herself. This latter had probably adorned the sill of the dark window during the tenancy of some former lodgers, and having been left behind was thus utilized by Madame Le Beau.

"Have you heard of my dear papa and mamma?" asked Marie breathlessly. "I know they are in London. I feel they are in Soho. Help me to find them, I entreat."

"London is enormous. Soho is a large town of itself. Thou must have patience, my child," replied Madame Le Beau. "But the gentleman who conducted you here is a city missionary, and he knows everything. The English, they are religious, ma foi! and they think of our souls as well as our bodies. They provide as many as nine missionaries to foreigners, I hear, and Monsieur Brun is ours. We were here five months before he found us—starving, in fact. But now—well! we live."

"But you are not refugees?" said Marie.

"Not of the war. We were unhappy in France. Our extravagant, speculative husband, who left us—but I speak no more of him. I was a singer, a professor of music. I lost my position, and hearing that foreigners were well received in England, and

that the streets were paved with gold,—we find them less well paved than our boulevards, ha, ha!—we sold our furniture, gathered all the money we could, and came to England, my mother, Adèle, Lisette and I. Ha! the cunning minette! she hears her name, and wakes, expecting her cocoa. You see, we have always cocoa, for my husband was a grocer, and had patents for his cocoa, and when he left us he gave us our inheritance before his death—his cocoa-tins and his patents."

Madame Le Beau laughed heartily, and pointed first to Lisette, nestled in Adèle's lap, and then to a mantelpiece crowded with tins and jars, some of which were enveloped in paper wrappers.

"There is also the Bible that our good Monsieur Brun presented to us," she continued, indicating a book at the end of the mantelshelf. "He teaches us things of which I had not before thought. 'To the poor the gospel is preached,' and 'Blessed are the poor,' never came home to my heart until I suffered."

Marie opened wide her large black eyes; for if she had heard those words before she had not realized them.

"We must not begin theology to-night, mamma," interrupted Adèle. "May we have our cocoa?"

A general bustle succeeded, for the fire was extinguished, and there was no more fuel.

"I will go out and seek a salad and a mouthful of cheese. There is the soup for la grand'mère," said Madame Le Beau.

"Ah! but I have drunk all the soup!" exclaimed Marie.

"And M. Merric has not yet paid me my week," sighed Adèle.

All the countenances fell.

"The Lord will provide. Thou hast had thy dinner, Adèle?" said Madame Le Beau cheerfully.

"Yes; but the appetite failed me, thinking of thee, grandmamma, and Lisette without food."

Marie had been searching her bag, and had furtively drawn out her franc. She placed it shyly in Madame Le Beau's hand, saying,—

"For the salad and cheese, madame."

"Ah! said I not that the Lord would provide?" cried Madame Le Beau ecstatically, taking Marie in her arms and kissing her on both cheeks. "Now I have three children. I go to ensure our welcome home for the new-comer."

Hastily putting on a bonnet and mantle, she hurried out, and threading a maze of streets, reached the famous Newport Market, where, by the glare of lamplight, questionable viands were sold to the poor. A strange scene it was. Lanes scarcely a yard wide, with open shops on either side, streets,

IN NEWTORT MARKET.

with more shops, and barrows on the pavement, and people in crowds everywhere. In the midst, Newport Refuge, surrounded by a starving, ragged throng, craving admission. Madame Le Beau went straight to a certain barrow that she knew, where endive, and many other vegetables dear to the French, were displayed. It was presided over by a Frenchwoman, and an animated discourse and some chaffering ensued. Madame bought her salad and left the market, for she put no faith in any of its other commodities. Returning homewards she entered a shop where "fromager" (cheesemonger) was displayed in large letters. Here, all the people were French, and she was again at home. Having purchased a small quantity of a cheese with a knock-me-down odour, they all began to talk rapidly of the war.

"But Paris itself is in danger! What will happen next?" said one.

"Down with the Germans," said another.

"Have you heard of a Monsieur and Madame Altmann, who have fled to England from Paris?" asked Madame Le Beau cautiously.

Furious gesticulation ensued, for the name was German-Swiss, and nobody wished to know anything of a German.

"But they are actually French," pleaded Madame Le Beau.

"We know nothing of them; we wash our hands of them!" exclaimed the fromager, suiting the action to the word.

Madame Le Beau shrugged her shoulders, and went on to another French shop, where "boulanger" was over the door. Here she purchased one of the long French loaves, or rolls, and again a fierce talk of the war ensued; while she once more inquired for the Altmanns, with a similar result. She might have been in her native country to all intents and purposes, in that quarter of Soho, only she was safe from the war. She suddenly remembered her husband, and, with one of those strange contradictions to which we are all subject, she thought with a certain amount of terror of him, probably shut up and starving in Paris.

"We also starve, and it is his fault," she muttered, hardening her heart as she left the shop.

While she was absent, Adèle had made her grandmother drink the remainder of the soup, and had introduced Marie to an inner room, which she called the chambre à coucher. Here was a bedstead, on which was a good bed, which Madame Le Beau had brought with her, several boxes, many good garments hung against the wall, and a looking-glass.

"A good friend of Monsieur Brun has given us the bedstead. Ah! but they are generous, these

English! And now that I am placed, and that maman has lessons, we shall be well. If only thou couldst hear her sing!" said Adèle.

Poor Marie, who had not yet known what absolute destitution was, looked aghast at the small apartment and its furniture. She was weary and sad, and the mere thought of singing, in her profound unhappiness, seemed like profanation. She thought of her bright, luxurious home, and instinctively contrasted it with this dreary dwelling. Tears came into her eyes, but she repressed them, and tried to smile, remembering that she might have been alone and unbefriended in the streets but for these good people.

"Is not the grandmother wonderful?" said Adèle cheerily, purposely ignoring the tears. "She is eighty-four, and she is as young as I. Works, and makes us all cheerful. Ah! Lisette, but thou art importunate! She will soon accustom herself to thee, Marie, but she avoids strangers."

Lisette's tail did, in fact, increase to double its size when Marie attempted to stroke her; still, she had never seen so remarkable a cat, and Adèle, to divert her attention, began to put her through her facings. She could dance, and leap, and do everything but speak, she said.

"Lisette! Lisette!" sounded from the other room, and the cat disappeared instantly, to share the grandmother's broth.

"How greedy I was. I thought of no one but myself!" said Marie. "And Madame Mercier thinks of Lisette."

"Ah, but then she is our child. She has shared in all our privations, and, indeed, she was at one time nearly starved; and you should have seen her poor tail."

Marie could not help laughing, and when Madame Le Beau came in with more of sunshine than lamplight on her face, she ran up to her and thanked her for all her kindness.

"I have been inquiring for thy parents, and we are sure to find them. But first we partake of the supper thou hast given us," returned Madame Le Beau.

Adèle dragged a box from the inner room, and spread some sort of cloth over it, upon which were laid her mother's purchases, and several empty cocoa or jam-pots turned topsy-turvey. Two knives appeared, one being placed before Marie, and when Madame Le Beau had said grace, they began their supper; and never were the most costly viands better appreciated. Marie found her appetite, while her spirits rose insensibly with those of her friends. She and Adèle still sat on the mignonette box, and Madame Le Beau on the other box, Madame Mercier occupying the seat of honour near the empty grate.

"Ah! Mademoiselle Marie, thou art not accus-

tomed to this sort of thing. But one gets used to it, and I find the bottom of a jam-pot makes a good plate, but small, while it serves for a cup on the other side. Adversity makes resources. We expect more than we deserve. We must be thankful for all, as good Monsieur Brun says. Now, Adèle, recount to us your history."

Thus spoke Madame Le Beau, and her daughter related the events of her day. She had scarcely sat down for trying cloaks and mantles upon the customers, and the mignonette box seemed luxurious; but every one had been kind to her, particularly the young Mr. Merric, who persisted in speaking to her in what he believed to be French. But she was far too polite to laugh at his mistakes, and they agreed in saying "he has good intentions, this young man." But she had not seen him after Marie left the shop, and she begged her to relate, in turn, what had happened to her.

Then Adèle, with intuitive hospitality and good breeding, took Marie into the inner room, where she helped her to undress, and, with many apologies, pointed to a small bed on the floor in one corner, which she had improvised, it was impossible to say how, and asked if she would mind sleeping there, because the grandmother required much room. Marie acquiesced thankfully, for she longed to lie down, were it even on the bare boards.

"We will offer a little prayer," said Adèle. "Since we attend the mission services we never neglect that."

They knelt down, and Adèle asked, with childlike simplicity, that "the good God would reunite Marie to her parents, as well as her own father to her; and continue to them all their daily bread, for His dear Son's sake." Then she returned thanks for the blessings of the day, and poured forth a supplication for their native Paris. This caused both the girls to shed tears, though they little realized the state of that capital at that moment.

Happily, the sorrows of youth vanish imperceptibly as the land of dreams is entered. Marie was tired out, and no sooner did she lie down in her corner than she fell asleep. In that blessed dreamland she knew not whether her weary limbs rested on down or straw. She was not conscious that Madame Le Beau's treasured boxes had been rifled to form her bed and pillow, or that a blanket had been removed from the larger bed to cover her. She was once more happy with her father and mother.

It is now time to inquire what had actually become of those beloved parents.

It is matter of history, that in the month of September, 1870, the German inhabitants of Paris had notice to quit that city. Two days was the time

allowed. It was but natural that, in a war between France and Germany, the natives of the latter country should scarcely be safe in Paris. Still, as Madame Altmann was actually French, and her husband had been bred from infancy in Paris, though his parents were German, they believed themselves unjustly dealt with.

At first, Madame Altmann determined to remain in Paris, being French, and to take care of their property. They believed Marie to be safe at school in the country, and resolved to leave her there until she could rejoin her mother. But preparations for war are terrible things, and almost at the eleventh hour her heart failed her, and she could not let her husband go without her. In the terror and uncertainty she wrote hurriedly to Marie's governess, and said they had not a moment left—they must take flight without their child, but she would write from England, whither they were going. Barricades, fortifications, soldiers, cannon, within and around the city, and a foreign foe at no great distance without, were enough to cow the stoutest heart; but perhaps nothing was harder than to be banished from what you looked on as your native place because your forefathers had belonged to the enemy. Monsieur Altmann's sympathies were divided, but he had no choice—he must quit Paris. He placed his possessions in the care of his wife's relatives,

secured such money as he had in the house, and prepared to depart from the Faubourg St. Honoré. But at the twelfth hour his heart failed him concerning his only child.

"I would rather die than leave Marie behind," he said. "We shall be safe. I don't believe they will dare to touch me."

This was actually spoken at the Gare du Nord, or, as we should say, "Great Northern Station." Most people have seen crowded railway stations, but few have beheld such a crowd as thronged the Gare du Nord that day.

Half the Germans, many of the French, and most of the English inhabitants of Paris were there with their wives and children. All were bound for that refuge of the destitute, England. All were clamouring for tickets, and while such a babel of voices sounded as might almost have overtopped a cannonade, Monsieur Altmann, waiting his turn, made up his mind to seek Marie, and risk the consequences. He was a resolute man, and all his wife's entreaties to let her remain and depart himself were unavailing. To avoid suspicion, however, he took tickets to Calais; and when they were at last on their way thither, he and Madame Altmann slipped out at one of the first stations, and proceeded by a circuitous route to seek their child.

It was a fatal delay. When they reached the

school, they found its mistress in much anxiety, not only on Marie's account, but on her own and that of her establishment. It was rumoured that the enemy was close at hand, and in her terror she had despatched most of her pupils to their respective homes, and was considering what it would be best to do with Marie, since her parents had fled to England, when it was discovered that she had run away.

"Gone! where, and how?" asked her bewildered father, while the mother broke out into passionate reproaches.

"It must have been after I read her your letter, announcing that you were on the eve of departure for England," replied Mademoiselle De Beauvoisin, the governess.

"She would expect to catch us before our departure, and accompany us!" cried Madame Altmann. "She should not have been told. She is so eager—so affectionate. She loves us with such extreme tenderness. What will become of her? What if she fall into the hands of the savages?"

"They are still Christian men, and will respect her youth and innocence. Besides, they are, in effect, her father's countrymen," replied Monsieur Altmann, somewhat hurt, as he often was at his wife's abuse of the German nation. "War is cruel, but the combatants are human. They are also equally

civilized on each side, and no savages, Madame Altmann."

"They are worse than savages, for they know right from wrong, and yet they come to make war on our own beautiful France!" returned the excited wife. "How shall we find our child, our cherished one, our Marie?"

Monsieur Altmann was a man of quiet, decided character; his wife was all fire and excitement. While he stood considering what to do under the circumstances, she inquired concerning Marie's dress and resources. When she heard that she had left the school in her ordinary morning walking dress, and had taken only a small bag with her, she asked to be allowed to see her wardrobe.

"Thou hadst better pack up her clothes, and return with them to our house," said Monsieur Altmann. "If she has gone home, thou wilt assuredly find her there; and being both French, thou wilt be respected. I will make my way to Dieppe, and as I speak German and French equally well, I may escape both parties."

Upon this, poor Madame Altmann threw her arms round her more sedate husband, and declared that she could not separate herself from him.

"It is like the Roman women in the great picture between the two armies. Husbands on one side; fathers and brothers on the other!" she cried.

"But thou and Marie can rejoin me in England, or perhaps in the provinces. I will write and give thee the address. It is only a few days more or less," replied Monsieur Altmann, embracing his wife.

He little knew how soon all postal communication would cease between the two countries, and egress from Paris be as impossible as ingress into it.

"And what will become of thee? Wilt thou not return to Germany? There thou art safe," she shrieked.

"And thou, and Marie? Thou art French, and wouldst not be received there at present," he replied. "No; England is our only refuge till the danger is past. Thou wilt come to me there. We have no time to lose. I endanger Mademoiselle de Beauvoisin by remaining here. Thou leavest our child to the mercy of the world!"

Monsieur Altmann's voice trembled, and his poor wife burst into passionate weeping and remonstrance. But he was firm, and bade her be quick, and go with mademoiselle for Marie's clothes, after which he would see her off for Paris. In his heart he did not believe that he should be obliged to quit France, and counted on remaining in the provinces as a Frenchman till the crisis was past. Neither had he any doubt but that Marie was in Paris with her grandmother.

"It is cowardly to run away when danger menaces the country of one's adoption," he reflected, as he paced the room in which he was left alone for a little space, while the ladies rapidly packed a portmanteau with Marie's "effects," as her mother called them. "I will remain, if possible, and share the fate of my friends. But what if my brother, who is in Germany, should have joined the opposite party? C'est affreux."

It was indeed frightful—and he covered his face with his hands, and prayed that some way of escape might come.

The fiacre that had brought them from the small post town was still waiting at the door, and when his wife and Mademoiselle De Beauvoisin returned, dragging the portmanteau between them, he hurried Madame Altmann off, and they drove quickly to the station.

"Tell our darling to be patient. Be thou patient also," he said, with a broken voice, as they bowled along, past excited villagers, soldiers, and wondering, anxious peasants.

No one knew what would happen next, or when or where German troops might pass. They reached the station in safety, however, and the ticket for Paris was taken. A hurried embrace, and Madame Altmann was whirled off, more dead than alive with fear and sorrow, while her husband turned to take

his ticket for Dieppe, where he reckoned he might either remain a few days or cross to England.

Madame Altmann reached Paris safely; but she had to walk from the station to her home, for she could gain neither omnibus nor cab, every vehicle being employed by people leaving Paris for other capitals or countries. When she reached her house in the Faubourg St. Honoré she found her mother and a brother in charge, and the shop still open. The siege and the scarceness had not yet begun.

"Marie, Marie! Mon enfant!" she cried, when her astonished mother came to meet her.

"She is not here. Why hast thou returned? What has become of the child and thy husband? Where is he?" were the questions that greeted her.

We already know that Marie was not in Paris, and her agonised mother found that she had left her husband in vain, and that she must, at least, wait until she heard of him.

He, meanwhile, was on his way to Dieppe, feeling morally certain that his wife and child were in Paris. Still, he had an uneasy doubt concerning Marie, who, he felt, might have persuaded herself that he and her mother had started for England, and might have therefore rashly pursued them. Thus, while his natural countrymen were steadily advancing and surrounding Paris on the east, he was distancing them on the west, and when, at last, he reached

Dieppe in comparative safety, he wished himself either back in Paris, or among the combatants on one side or the other. Inaction seemed death.

But he was not allowed to be long inactive. He had forgotten that, although he had a French tongue he had a German face.

"Your passport?" sounded suddenly in his ears, as he was about to leave the station.

He presented it to the official who demanded it, and who did not chance to know that German citizens had been ordered to leave Paris.

"Friedrich Altmann and his wife. From Calais to Dover," he read meditatively. "You are German, monsieur; you must come with me."

"I have lived in France all my life. My wife is French," pleaded Altmann; but he spoke to the winds.

"That is not my affair. You must show yourself to the prefect," replied the official.

"I may be taken for a spy, or for anything they please," thought Altmann, following him.

He was taken before the prefect, who had his hands, mind, and heart so full that he had not room in either for the numerous causes he had to settle. He therefore disposed of some in a summary manner, and delayed others. Altmann came under the latter category. It was in vain that he argued that he was a citizen of Paris, and himself virtually

ON THE QUAY, DIEPPE.

French. That he had received orders to quit Paris, and was going to England, and that he had not been in Germany since he was an infant. He was personally unknown at Dieppe, and, at the moment, could think of no one whom he could ask to appear as witness of his truth. He was, therefore, condemned to wait, in temporary confinement and under supervision, until further inquiries could be made respecting him. He was searched, and his money, valuables, and such few papers as he had about him, were taken from him. When he remonstrated in French that he had, at least, no symptom of foreign accent, he was answered that inquiries should be made, and that he should be released as soon as orders were received from headquarters.

Fretting under these hardships, he was taken by a gendarme to safe quarters. Days sped on, and public anxieties thickened, while he remained in durance, and heard that the siege of Paris had begun.

CHAPTER III.

MARIE IN SERVICE.

I CAN be no longer an encumbrance on you, madame. I must find something to do. I could sing in the streets, or sell matches, or even wash the door-steps, but I can no longer be idle. I seek my parents in vain. I see foreigners and foreigners; I even recognize some. I inquire for my dear father and mother, and nothing is known concerning them."

Marie had been some time in England, when she said this to Madame Le Beau.

"We will consult the good Monsieur Brun,"

replied madame. "But for him and his pious friends, Adèle would not have been placed, and I should not have my three lessons in singing. I now go to give one, and will call at the Maison des Étrangers on my return, where he is every day. Oh! the blessed institution that it is. It is already crowded with foreigners, and has not been long opened."

"May I go there, dear madame?"

"Assuredly, when the services are sufficiently organized. But I must not delay. Adieu, my mother. Adieu, my child. Thou takest care of the grandmother when we are absent, Marie. Now we are busy, we could not do without thee."

Madame Le Beau kissed her hand, smiled, and disappeared.

"There must be two Madame Le Beaus," thought Marie, looking after her. "She is now quite a lady."

Such was, indeed, the case. The loose princess dressing-gown had been laid aside, and replaced by a perfect costume extracted from one of the boxes in the adjoining room; for a Frenchwoman keeps her clothes, if nothing else.

The wavy hair was surmounted by a Parisian bonnet, maintained in the mode by daily re-touches; and Madame Le Beau might have been fresh from Worth's for aught her *clientèle,* as she called her three employers, knew to the contrary.

"And she is so handsome," sighed Marie. "I

wonder Monsieur Le Beau could have forsaken her and Adèle."

"Now that we have arranged our affairs, thou shalt read to me," said Madame Mercier.

The arrangement consisted in preparing the vegetables for the soup, and placing the disused boxes and empty tins and pots round the walls. Marie seated herself in the window, where there was happily a bench, and whence she could look into a small dark court below, and up to innumerable chimney-pots above. She began to read the Bible to Madame Mercier.

"Where the good Monsieur Brun has turned down the leaf. It tells me what I am by nature, and what he assures me I may become by grace. It comforts me to believe what M. Brun and the Bible say. You see, my child, we are saved by the grace of God alone, through faith in His dear Son, and not by our works at all. I have learnt that in my exiles, Dieu merci," said Madame Mercier, taking up a stocking she was knitting for the wife of a neighbouring butcher.

Marie found the chapter indicated, and began to read with much interest. She was not quite the Marie to whom we were first introduced; for her colour and general appearance had faded together. As to Madame Mercier, her head was still swathed with a bandage, beneath which her black eyes

twinkled restlessly; and she often interrupted the reading by reproaches to Lisette, whose big tail would entangle with her worsted, as she alternately slumbered and woke up on the old woman's lap.

There was a knock at the door, and Lisette jumped off.

"Enter. Open, Marie," said madame.

To the surprise of both, a smart young gentleman came in, whom Marie recognized as Mr. Merric.

"I beg your pardong. Je croyais Madame Le Beau," he said, glancing round at the nearly empty room, and being about to beat a retreat.

"It is Madame Le Beau's mother—Adèle's grandmother," said Marie, half in French half in English, for she had picked up a few words in the latter language.

"Ah! You are the little girl who came with the policeman. And is this where Miss Le Beau lives? And is that her relation? I had business in the neighbourhood, and I called to—to—see her mother," said the young man, surprised out of his attempt at French.

Marie explained everything volubly, but he understood little. He made out, however, that Madame Le Beau was from home, and with a pitying look at Marie, and a polite bow to the grandmother, was about to depart, when he turned and whispered to Marie,—

"Ne dites pas cela—que—that, don't say that—j'appelle—I call."

Marie understood. He did not wish Adèle to know that he had found her friends so circumstanced.

"It is doubtless another demand for my daughter," said Madame Mercier. "She is so clever she must make her way when known. She was professor in Paris, and sang formerly in public. But fortune changes with facts. Continue, my child."

Marie had not long recommenced the difficult chapter, when there was a great noise as of many feet on the usually quiet stairs, followed by a knock at the door. Marie opened it, and was asked whether "This is Madame Le Beau's?" She nodded, and the next moment a man came in backward, followed by a couch and another man. No sooner was the couch placed on the floor than the men disappeared, muttering, "Nothing to pay." They were succeeded immediately by a third man, bearing a moderately-sized round table, who also vanished, while Madame Mercier was asking many questions in French.

"Our Adèle will be ruined, and we shall need the money; but, indeed, it is a delightful couch, and will serve thee for a bed, Marie," said the old woman, sitting down on the leathern seat of a respectable, though apparently second-hand sofa. "And the table! It is mahogany! But our Adèle could not

find money to pay for this. It is our good fairy, Monsieur Brun, and his friend, eh, Lisette ?"

"It is the young Mr. Merric," thought Marie; but she respected his desire for secrecy, and was silent.

Lisette jumped first on the sofa, then on the table, and, to judge from her purr and her tail, knew more about it than either. Marie, forgetting her own troubles in joy of the new arrivals, began to dance with Lisette, and to embrace the grand'mère, who, in her emotion and gratitude, found her youth, and began to foot it also.

"Now let us arrange the room against their return," said Marie. "Your chair on this side the fire, madame—it is the warmest—the couch on the other; the table between. We shall no longer need the poor boxes, though Adèle and I found room on the green one."

"Ah! but Monsieur Brun and the Bible are right! The good God answers our prayers," said Madame Mercier. "You see, He even sends us furniture, and shall He not provide food? I go to return Him thanks."

The difficult chapter was laid aside for that day, while madame went into the other room, and Marie arranged and re-arranged the new possessions. It was pretty to see her, with flushed face, moving them with a sort of mathematical precision, until

her eye was satisfied that they were precisely where they ought to be. Then she took Madame Mercier's knitting, and placed it on the table, laid the Bible near it, drew her chair close to it, and stirred the fire and the pot-au-feu. Glancing around for other ornaments, she spied a piece of music and something like a workbox in one corner, which she put upon the table before the couch.

"There is nothing else but those terrible cocoatins, bearing the name of Le Beau," she murmured. "Oh! had we but some of our beautiful bijouterie! But doubtless that is consumed in the horrible war."

Tears succeeded smiles, but she brushed them off, thinking to herself that she must be gay with the gay, and that if it pleased God, He might send her parents to her quite as easily as He could send furniture to Madame Le Beau and Adèle.

Madame Le Beau came in, followed by the missionary. Her mother reappeared at the same moment, and there was such a hubbub that a listener on the stairs might have imagined at least a dozen people in warm discourse. Madame Mercier recounted facts, her daughter laughed and cried by turns, and declared them fables, while the missionary disclaimed all knowledge of the donor, and spoke of the goodness of the Almighty. He never lost an opportunity of saying a word in season, and rarely met with a repulse. Marie answered innu-

merable questions without betraying the confidence of Mr. Merric.

"You must not pawn the furniture, whatever your straits," said the missionary, who knew that all available articles had been pawned for food.

"I consider them only as a loan," replied Madame Le Beau, seating herself on the sofa before the piece of music. "I feel once more myself! Mother, we are again at home."

"It is Marie who found thy music, my child," said Madame Mercier.

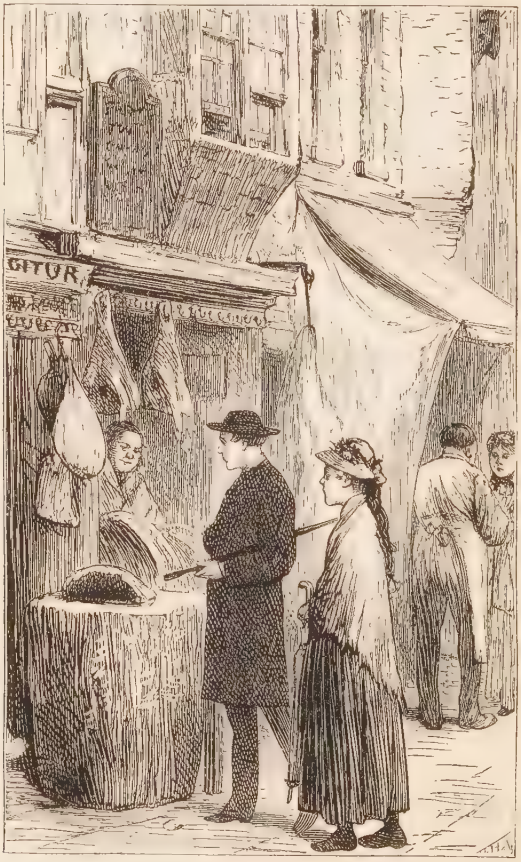
"And I come on her account," said the missionary, laying his hand kindly on Marie's shoulder. "You wish to work, my little one. I have a friend who is desirous to procure a French girl, not only to nurse his baby, but to speak French to his eldest daughter, who is his accountant. He is a butcher, but that does not signify. He lives in Soho, and you will still have a chance of meeting your parents."

It must be confessed that Marie's countenance fell. She had conceived a horror of the butchers' shops she had seen in Soho, and indeed of such places generally. But she recovered herself.

"A thousand thanks, monsieur. When shall I go? I have nursed my baby cousin. I will do my best."

"Then come with me, and I will introduce you, and see what my friends Mr. and Mrs. Pargitur think of you."

"Ah, but not at once, Monsieur Brun!" cried Madame Le Beau.



MARIE'S NEW HOME.

"Strike the iron while it is hot, madame. They

are worthy people, and we will ask God's blessing on the introduction."

Marie put on her hat and glancing dejectedly at the new furniture, followed the missionary. Passing through one or two streets, they reached a butcher's shop, which Marie was delighted to perceive looked at least respectable, and the meat displayed fit for human food, and not for carrion, as was much of that sold in the poorer neighbourhoods. They entered the shop, and the missionary introduced Marie to a stout, red-faced man, who had just shaken hands heartily with him. Marie shivered as she looked from his round face to his blue apron, on which hung, châtelaine-wise, the implements of his trade; and she felt sick as the smell of the meat penetrated from nostrils to throat. But he had a benevolent face, in spite of his surroundings, and she took courage while she tried in vain to understand his discourse.

"Hem! she looks slim for a nurse-girl, and my missus is all for growth. She don't think French necessary, as I do. You see, it is a language that carries us all over the world, and here, where there are such a deal of foreigners, it is inconvenient not to be able to parley-vous frongçais. I don't want to cheat or be cheated, but to drive an honest trade; and 'tis easier to knock down an ox—which is done in a minute and without pain, if you know how, for I hate cruelty to animals—than 'tis to knock one's

meaning into the brains of one as don't understand your lingo. So I want to make my girl there talk French."

Mr. Pargitur pointed to a sort of box at the end of the shop, and Marie, following the direction of his finger, saw a girl not much older than herself seated within it, a ledger before her, her elbows on the desk, and her eyes fixed on her. She had a wide-awake look, caused possibly by eyes, mouth, ears, and hair being all on the stretch. Marie meeting the round, staring, blue eyes, made a little frightened courtesy, and received a familiar nod in return.

"She's a good girl, a capital girl, though I say it as shouldn't," continued Mr. Pargitur. "Can cast up accounts, and calculate prices, from a pair of sheep's trotters to a quarter of mutton, or from pettitoes to sucking-pig—which reminds me that Christmas 'll soon be here, and you must put in your claim with the rest of the beggars."

Mr. Pargitur laughed, and the missionary thanked him heartily, for he knew that he meant to give a portion of his Christmas meat to the poor.

"Shall we introduce my little friend to Mrs. Pargitur?" asked the latter, laying his hand on Marie's shoulder.

"No need. She'll do. She's French all over," came in a decided voice from the box.

"All right. If Maria Amelia is satisfied, her ma's sure to agree," said Mr. Pargitur, giving the missionary a knock on his back. "When shall she come, my dear?" turning to the box.

"To-morrow at eight A.M. Can have her meals, and stop till eight P.M. If she teaches me French, and keeps Alma Edwin quiet, shall have half-a-crown a week, rising sixpence if she is here this time six months. I'll settle it with ma. She can't make mischief, for she don't understand English."

Miss Pargitur gave a confident nod, and turned to one of the men who had been waiting to have change for money paid him by a customer; while the missionary asked her father if he endorsed his daughter's proposal.

"All's correct that Maria Amelia says," replied the butcher with a wink. "There ain't two such girls in all London. But what does the little Frenchwoman say?"

The missionary repeated the proposal to Marie, who accepted it at once, and in her gratitude ran to Miss Pargitur's box, and would have embraced her, had not that young lady put her aside with decision, and the words,—

"None of that, sivvy play. Don't kiss my servants—know my place. What's the ticket, Thomas Scroggings?"

Marie withdrew, abashed, to her friend's protect-

ing care, while Mr. Pargitur laughed, patted her on the back, and said :—

"You see she's busy. Has to keep the accounts and give change, and she'll sit there, cold or hot, till morning if she can't balance 'em to a fraction. All Soho knows Maria Amelia's abilities."

"She is a good girl. Let her come to our French service in Greek Street. That will help her with the language and religion at the same time," said the missionary. "We hope to give our poor refugees spiritual instruction to help them in their hard life, for will not 'faith' remove mountains?"

"I mean to," exclaimed Miss Pargitur, who had been listening to him with one ear, and to Thomas Scroggings with the other.

Marie was thankful for everything; but especially so that she was not to begin her duties that day, and that she might return to Denmark Street every night.

"But perhaps Adèle will like to sleep on the couch," she thought, as she was about to follow the missionary out of the shop, after making many elegant courtesies to Mr. Pargitur and his daughter.

She was arrested on the threshold by the latter, who forced something into her hand, and told her not to make a tomfool of herself. The "something" was a bone of beef wrapped in paper—the tomfoolery was her elegant courtesy.

"The French will make a week's living out of that," she said, nodding familiarly to the missionary and returning to her box.

And so it proved; for it was stewed and stewed, until the bone was indeed a bare bone, and yielded a halfpenny from the rag, bone, and bottle gatherer who frequented that district.

Both it and Marie were warmly welcomed, however, by kind Madame Le Beau and her mother, who satisfied her by the assurance that they could not sleep without Adèle in their bed, nor Adèle without them.

They were all three in a state of great excitement until Adèle returned, and it increased tenfold when she opened the door, and stood, dumb with amazement, to survey the new possessions, which had been scoured and rubbed into brightness. It was evident to all that she knew nothing of them; and Madame Mercier declared solemnly that they had come direct from heaven in answer to her prayers.

The way they laid supper on the new table was a sight worth seeing. The soup was turned into one of the basins already referred to as Madame Le Beau's wash-tub. This was carefully balanced on a large cocoa-tin, lest the hot soup should mark the table, and when all was prepared Adèle produced half a dozen spoons that she had purchased third-hand for as many pence. It was no wonder

that Madame Le Beau should exclaim, "It is a supper for an emperor. Now all the kings of the earth may sup. Marie has brought good fortune with her."

The remainder of the evening passed in speculations on the good fairy who had visited the dwelling, and on Marie's future prospects; so that for once they forgot Paris, and the horrors of war, and slept in comparative peace in their land of refuge.

But Marie, after all, did not sleep so well on the new couch as on her doubtful bed in the inner room. She was continually waking up with the recollection that she was to be in service at eight o'clock; and when seven struck from a neighbouring church tower, she rose in the dark and began to dress herself. Adèle soon joined her, and lighted the candle; after which they kindled the fire, so that when Madame Le Beau appeared, the new furniture was visible. Marie found concealment of the donor more and more difficult, and the name of Merric fairly burnt on her tongue.

"I know my way, madame. The house is fortunately near," she said, when dressed as neatly as untoward circumstances permitted.

"But thou shalt not go unprotected the first day," replied Madame Le Beau, throwing some sort of cloak over her uncompleted toilet, and a shawl about her head.

As it was so early, she did not consider her general appearance important, and Marie was too well-bred to remark upon it; so, after many embraces, they departed together for Mr. Pargitur's. Madame was proud of her English, and had prepared a speech for the benevolent butcher and his wife, to whom her mother was also indebted for the order for the stockings she was knitting; but her "Tousand tanks, sare; much oblige, ma'am," was cut short by Maria Amelia, who met them at the door, where she had been standing about a minute, her eyes on the church clock. Eight struck just as they arrived.

"All right. Like punctuality. Breakfast ready. What's that in French?" said Maria Amelia beckoning Marie.

"Bon jour, mademoiselle. Grand merci," returned Marie, looking at Madame Le Beau.

"That it ain't. That's 'Good morning, miss,'" laughed Maria Amelia, leading Marie through the shop into the house, and leaving Madame Le Beau without. "Ma, here's the French nurse-girl that is to keep Almar Edwin quiet by teaching him French before he can speak English."

"Bosh! your pa's out of his senses!" was the reply of Mrs. Pargitur, a little, round, apple-dumpling of a woman, who put no faith in foreigners.

Bewildered Marie fancied the room was full of

children, all of whom were staring at her; but she afterwards found there were only five, including the baby, who was screaming somewhere. Mrs. Pargitur produced him, and taking him to Marie, placed him in her arms. Marie was fond of babies, and began to fondle him in a way that softened Mrs. Pargitur, and silenced Alma Edwin. Mr. Pargitur came in, and the family sat down to a substantial breakfast, Marie remaining without the pale. She remarked that the room was comfortably furnished, if gloomy, and the children well-behaved, also that Mr. Pargitur said grace.

"That boy Alma Edwin's asleep already. Put him in his cradle, ma, and let his nurse-girl begin to teach me French," said Maria Amelia; and as everybody obeyed her, the baby was placed in the cradle.

Marie trembled lest she should have held him ill or otherwise offended; but she was reassured when both Mr. Pargitur and his daughter called her to the table, and motioned her to a seat between them. The former began to fill her a plate with food, which was more than Maria Amelia bargained for, while that damsel pointed to a dish of sausages, looked resolutely at Marie, and said, "Sivvy play." Poor Marie did not understand her meaning, but Pargitur said, "Parlez-vous frongçais;" and she at once gave the name of the sausages in French,

which her new pupil repeated after her, and which was re-echoed by the whole family, amid shouts of laughter.

"Shut up," said Maria Amelia, authoritatively; and there was instant silence. "I don't mean your mouths. Eat your breakfast, and say after the nurse-girl," she added.

The lesson continued by her pointing to the various viands and other articles on the table, and repeating them, together with the rest of the family, after Marie in French. She was pursuing precisely the same system as the illustrious Coleridge, when he went to Germany, and located himself in a German family in order to acquire that language, at a time when it was all but an unknown tongue to the English. Marie was naturally clever and lively, and entered with interest into her work. In her distress at the villainous pronunciation, she stood up, and pointing from one to the other, made them repeat the words after her again and again, until the sound more nearly approached the sense. In her excitement, she alternately clapped her hands or shrugged her shoulders, which caused the children so much amusement, that they were at last obliged to cover their mouths with their hands to avoid provoking Maria Amelia, and even this could not restrain their merriment, which burst out at last, to their sister's anger and Marie's distress. The explosion drew

Maria Amelia's attention on the culprits; and gave her father an opportunity of touching Marie's shoulder unperceived, pointing to the plate before her, and saying, "Eat your sawsiss."

Marie began her breakfast thankfully, and soon found herself alone. Pargitur and his daughter went into the shop, the children to school, and the wife to call the maid-of-all-work, whom she afterwards assisted in clearing the table. Miss Pargitur returned before Marie had finished, and beckoned her to her box, where she made room for her at her side. Pointing to the figures on the ledger before her, she gave her to understand that she wished to learn them in French, and Marie began to teach her "un, deux, trois," etc., with proper solemnity and perseverance. She had mastered several, when Alma Edwin's cry was heard, simultaneously with the appearance of a customer, and Marie was remanded.

This commencement may be considered as an epitome of Marie's day. The one-year-old baby was left almost entirely to her care, while at meals and every spare moment the oral lessons were repeated. She was tired but hopeful when she returned to Madame Le Beau.

At the end of her first week, Maria Amelia condescendingly gave her half-a-crown, taking that opportunity of learning the French of it, as nearly as Marie could teach her. She carried it to her

friends; but asked to be allowed a small portion for herself, that she might put it by against her parents came. The request brought the tears to her eyes; for those parents were rarely out of her mind, and Madame Le Beau wished her thus to appropriate all her earnings, but this she positively declined.

One Saturday evening, when the Pargiturs were waiting tea for the father of the family, he came in much excited.

"I have just met with half a dozen poor foreigners wandering about without money or lodging," he said, addressing first his wife and then his daughter. "I can't let my fellow-creatures die of cold and starvation, while I have an empty room and more meat than I can sell. They can't speak a work of English, but I suppose that missionary who brought Marie here would understand them and interpret. Send her to fetch him, Maria Amelia, while I give them shelter for one night at least."

Mr. Pargitur went out of the house by the private door, without awaiting an answer, and returned to it by the same, followed by a shivering, dripping party of two men, one woman, and three children, whom he beckoned through the passage and up the stairs to a room formerly occupied by a lodger, but which was now empty.

"There never was such a man! He'll ruin his own fam'ly," exclaimed the wife.

"No he won't. 'Give to the poor lend to the Lord,'" returned her daughter. "Marie, allez, go. Monsieur Brun; ici, here. Umbrella, parapluie. Maison des Étrangers. Queek!"

Marie understanding only in part, took the offered umbrella, and ran as fast as she could to Greek Street. She knew the way well, for she had attended the French services there, both with Maria Amelia and Madame Le Beau, and managed daily to pass and repass the Maison, in the vague hope of finding her parents. When she arrived, the missionary was engaged. Marie crept into a corner of the room and waited.

The Maison des Étrangers had been opened only the previous October for the benefit of the refugees. It was already crowded from morning to night with foreigners, who came under all sorts of circumstances. At that moment the missionary was concluding a short service, and he and his strange congregation were engaged in prayer. The room was small and old, furnished only with chairs and a sort of desk; but there was a fire, and in the window the words, "Soyez les bien-venus. Be welcome." Here friend met friend, and here difference of creed and nationality was ignored. Here, also, help, advice, and sympathy were readily bestowed, and friends and members of the City Mission did their best to prove that Christianity

is for all times and for all people, and its Divine Founder "the only salvation." *

When the prayer was concluded, Marie pierced the little crowds, and delivered her imperfect message to the missionary. Then she added, "Ask if they have seen my father and mother, dear sir."

"Does any one here know anything of Monsieur and Madame Altmann, of the Faubourg St. Honoré?" he inquired in a loud voice; but there was a silence, and a shaking of heads. "I will return immediately. Make yourselves at home," he added, and taking Marie by the hand accompanied her to Mr. Pargitur's.

* The Maison des Étrangers is now removed from Greek Street to 6, Frith Street, Soho, the Mission to the Italians occupying the room in Greek Street.

CHAPTER IV.

SUNSHINE AFTER CLOUDS.

WHEN the missionary and Marie arrived, Mr. Pargitur was waiting for them at the door, and told them to follow him upstairs. Marie asked her friend if she were to come, and receiving an affirmative answer, found herself in a room which she had not before seen. It was empty of all furniture, but good Mr. Pargitur had ordered the servant to light a fire, round which his six shivering guests were gathered. The room was full of smoke, the chimney not having been heated before during that winter, so the inmates looked like shadows. The missionary approached them and inquired their history. One of the two men acted as spokesman, whose French, though good, had a German twang, which Marie easily recognized. He said that he and his wife and

children had remained in France imprudently long, but that they had managed to escape at the last moment, having left Paris for the provinces before the siege commenced. They had arrived in London from Dieppe early that morning, and had been wandering about ever since. They had been told of an hotel called the Maison des Étrangers, which was somewhere in Soho, and they had found it with difficulty. The door was open, and they looked in, but there was nothing but straw chairs and books. They had been mistaken—this was no hotel.

The missionary explained that the room they had seen was no inn, but a place where spiritual food was administered, and whence temporal aid came as its result. The Franco-German scepticism scarcely believed this, but the stranger was too polite to say so. He wound up his history by narrating how that "good gentleman there" had taken pity on their forlorn condition, and had invited them in; and that they now hoped to gain some kind of employment.

"You have repeated one of the Saviour's texts, 'I was a stranger, and ye took Me in. Inasmuch as ye have done it unto the least of these, ye have done it unto Me,'" said the missionary.

"And we are all safe!" ejaculated the woman, who was kneeling before the fire surrounded by her children.

A groan burst from the other man, who had not spoken, and who was leaning against the mantelpiece with his face towards the fire, smoke still enveloping the group.

"Monsieur! madame! I entreat, tell me if you have heard anything of Monsieur and Madame Altmann?" here broke in Marie, unable longer to restrain herself.

She was standing behind Mr. Pargitur at a little distance. At her words the silent man turned, leapt forwards, nearly knocked down his benefactor, and caught her in his arms, exclaiming, "My child! my angel! my Marie!"

Then there was silence for a few seconds in the empty, smoke-filled room. It was broken by an unrestrainable sob and a hysterical cry.

"My father! my father!" half shrieked Marie, clinging to the neck of him who held her, and passionately kissing him.

It was indeed Altmann, who could not speak for sobs.

Mr. Pargitur turned inquiringly to the missionary, who explained, in a whisper, that the child he had benefited had found a father in the stranger he was sheltering. The worthy man passed his hand before his eyes, and then laid it on Marie's head with the words, "A good girl, Maria Amelia says so. A very good girl."

Monsieur Altmann caught the kindly hand and pressed it to his lips, which so overpowered Mr. Pargitur that he hastily left the room, and was followed by the missionary.

When he related to his expectant family what had passed, reproaches died away on their lips.

"Take them something to eat," said Mrs. Pargitur.

"Let Marie off. I'll nurse Almar Edwin to-night. Give her three shillings. Let her take her father to the Café Monaco," cried oracular Maria Amelia, fixing her round eyes on the missionary.

He went back and repeated this to Marie, who was now surrounded by all the refugees, and telling her story between laughter and tears. Her father's arm was round her neck, and the flames were beginning slowly to disperse the smoke.

"We will go to Madame Le Beau. She, the grand'mère, and Adèle will rejoice with us. I shall then hear of my mother," said Marie.

They went accordingly, thoughtless of rain, of cold, of hunger, of all external influences. Hand in hand through the foggy streets, silent for very happiness.

"I have found my father!" cried Marie, as she entered, leading a haggard, unkempt stranger by the hand.

The fumes of coffee greeted them, and a fire

burnt in the small grate. Madame Le Beau and her mother rose impulsively with many exclamations, but their words died on their lips, when Mr. Altmann sank down on the end of the couch and burst into tears. He was exhausted by emotion and abstinence, as Marie had been on a similar occasion. Madame Le Beau poured him out some coffee, which Marie gave him, and he soon recovered.

"Excuse me," he said. "Anxiety concerning my wife and child have nearly killed me, and the joy overpowers me."

"Where is she? Where is the dear mamma?" gasped Marie.

"Thou must positively ask no questions till thy papa has made his repast," interrupted Madame Le Beau. "You will excuse our service, Monsieur Altmann. You will have heard of Monsieur Le Beau, grocer. These are his legacies."

"But, yes; I have tasted his excellent cocoa," replied Altmann, brightening at the familiar name, and then thankfully eating the cheese and roll placed before him, and drinking the coffee.

"How thin thou art! How ill thou dost look, my papa!" said Marie, stroking her father's cheeks, whiskers, beard, and embracing him incessantly.

Adèle came in, and was introduced by Marie as her preserver, her guardian angel; and by degrees

the little party settled down, and Monsieur Altmann, with Marie's hand in his, began to relate his adventures. We need only briefly take up the story from the period when we left him in detention at Dieppe.

He was vexatiously kept there, without sufficient reason, until the eve of the day on which we meet him again. As his statement concerning himself was found to be correct, he was finally released, but only a portion of his money was returned to him. He had left France for England by order of the authorities, and had no choice but to leave his wife behind him. He had written to her, but had received no letter from her, so he could only suppose that she was shut up in Paris, whence no letters now came.

"And but for me she would be with us now!" cried Marie. "Had I patiently remained with Mademoiselle de Beauvoisin, we should have been all three together. Thou wouldst have taken me with thee, and we should have escaped at once. Forgive me, dear papa. Alas! my poor mamma!"

She burst into tears.

"Then we should not have met, Marie, mamie," said Madame Le Beau. "Thou wouldst not have known Monsieur Brun and the good Mr. Pargitur. All is for the best."

Marie was somewhat consoled by this reflection,

and inquired concerning the family now under Mr. Pargitur's roof.

"I came over with them from France, and we fraternised, as the unfortunate ever must," replied Altmann. "I was so lonely that I clung to them, and wandered about London with them. On our way we were directed to a court, where hundreds of starving ragged people stood about an iron railing surrounding a door. Within was a curious restaurant whence issued the odour of soup, and where waiters in white aprons were ladling it out of boilers. We joined the crowd, and a man beckoned us inside. There we had a basin of excellent soup, though, it must be confessed, our companions at the repast were of the canaille de la canaille. There were at least fifty seated on forms at long tables, replaced by others so long as the soup lasted."

"It was doubtless Ham Yard," interrupted Madame Le Beau. "They are charitable these English, and we formerly dined there free of expense."

"It is that," returned Altmann. "Afterwards we roamed about again until my Marie's excellent friend found us. And you know the rest. I have my treasure, my cherished one, my Marie."

Here Adèle whispered something to her mother and grandmother, the result of which was, that they insisted on Altmann's taking possession of Marie's

couch for that night at least, and leaving the empty room to the other refugees. He could scarcely be prevailed on to accept the kind offer, but they finally overruled his objections, and Marie once more slept in her old corner, while her father gratefully laid down on young Merric's welcome present.

It is unnecessary to give in detail the events of the following week, or the privations of the numerous fugitives from Paris. It would be difficult to say how they managed to exist, but they thought themselves fortunate if they procured one meal a day, whether at the soup-kitchen in Leicester Square, that in Ham Yard, or through the bounty of such kindly souls as Pargitur. Most of them had a little money or some valuables, which they eked out until they procured employment; but furniture or bedding they had none. Many haunted the markets for the refuse, like our own starving poor, and some of them made mattresses of the chaff and leaves left from the Indian corn. The Maison des Étrangers, opened on their account, proved truly a home of refuge and salvation to hundreds.

It was here that the well-known philanthropist, Mr. George Moore, whose biography by Mr. Smiles has been read by tens of thousands, gave them a supper, and we resume our story at that repast. Invitations were issued to more than the room would conveniently hold, but numbers of uninvited

came, so that the crowd of hungry guests could scarcely see one another. Marie and her father, as well as the Le Beaus and the inmates of Pargitur's empty room, were amongst them. It was Christmas-tide, and the cold was intense, so that the warm room was, in itself, welcome. Meat and coals had already been distributed by the missionary and his friends to the most necessitous, and foreigner as well as native experienced at that thrice-blessed season that old English hospitality was ever new.

Marie sat by her father's side, and listened to the excited talk of her elders. She was happy, though, in spite of Madame Le Beau's best efforts, her clothes were worn and shabby. So were her father's. Here and there, however, bright colours shone in fashionable bonnets, as, for instance, in Madame Le Beau's and Adèle's, who were, so to say, amongst the best off of the gathering—for poor were the richest. Viands dear to Frenchmen were provided, and the sauce of hunger was superadded. Altmann had not yet succeeded in finding employment, and his day had been spent in seeking it. He had tasted nothing since early morning, and then only a cup of coffee; for although he still accepted the hospitality of the couch, he could not be prevailed on to share Madame Le Beau's hard-earned food. She, however, insisted on his taking half of Marie's weekly earnings; and if Marie had

ever felt repugnance to her situation, she now hugged it to her heart in her gratitude and desire to help her father.

"The dear Miss Pargitur begins already to understand and speak our language. She is so clever! And the baby loves me," she whispered to her father, during an interval of the repast. "Ah! but thou art hungry, my father."

"What excellent coffee, my child! What haricots! What salad! They have hearts these English," he replied.

"When I return to Paris I shall say, 'Glory be to the English!'" shouted some one amongst the crowd.

"Rather, 'the God of the English,'" returned the missionary.

This produced much controversy, for there were those present who scarcely believed in a God; but all other topics merged into that of Paris, and the starving state of its inmates. It was difficult for Frenchman to keep his hand off German, even though they came from the same city.

The supper was followed by friendly and religious addresses from friends of the mission, which were so worded as to lead the souls of the refugees to their merciful Saviour, while their bodies were being refreshed and strengthened. In the midst of these the missionary held up something that had been brought to him, exclaiming, breathlessly, "A

letter! A letter! From Paris. Dropped from a balloon. Any one here of —— ?"

"For me! for me!" cried the excited throng, rising simultaneously, and holding out the hand.

"For Mr. Altmann! Directed first to Dieppe. Thence sent to London, apparently on the chance of its finding him," replied the missionary.

All sat down again except Altmann and Marie. The former was too much overcome to speak, but the latter exclaimed, "It is my father! Monsieur Brun, you know us."

The letter was handed to her over the heads of her country-people, who were packed so closely as to be almost unable to move. All eyes were fixed upon her as she gave the torn and soiled missive to her father, and the breathless silence of expectation succeeded the previous bustle. When he had opened and read it, impulsive inquiries followed as to what was the news.

As soon as Altmann could speak for emotion, he rose and said, "It is from my wife. Our fellow-citizens are starving, keeping life in them by eating dogs and cats and rats and the refuse of everything. The siege continues. Why have we been cast out, as mongrels, unable either to attack or defend?"

This question was answered by many voices; for there was scarcely any one present who had not relatives and friends in the beleaguered city.

"I should like to go over and help them—to see how the aid sent out by us English is administered," said the host, to whom the missionary was rapidly translating what was passing.

And he, Mr. George Moore, did in effect afterwards go as one of the English delegates to Paris—the Hon. Mr. Kinnaird being the other—to distribute English bounty to the famished inhabitants; his sympathy having been aroused at this gathering.

When the excitement calmed, the missionary sought to influence the disturbed minds of the party to thankfulness for their present personal safety, and asked them to give "glory to God" for His loving-kindness in sending His only Son, not to shut the gates, as in Paris, but to open those of everlasting life to all believers.

Meanwhile Altmann and his child were poring over the feeble lines traced by the wife and mother, which showed a tender anxiety for them, while herself, in the depth of distress, yet expressed gratitude that they were, at least, not in Paris.

"My father is there," whispered Adèle, who sat next to Marie.

Adèle's attention had been much divided, for amongst the few English friends and helpers present was young Mr. Merric; and Marie had not failed to perceive that he had managed to force his way to their table with plates of good cheer more than

once, and had spoken so kindly to Adèle that the colour had risen to her pale cheeks. He had also noticed Marie, who had managed to make him understand that she had kept his secret. It will be remembered that Adèle owed her situation in the establishment of the uncle of Mr. Merric to the missionary, whose acquaintance that young man had made when visiting a distressed foreigner in his neighbourhood; for he, like hundreds of his class, was desirous of devoting himself to the service of his heavenly Master.

When the party broke up, after many kindly speeches and assurances of welcome and goodwill, the strangers gathered round their entertainers, and such as had been unable to find employment craved it. Altmann was amongst these. He had been trained in his youth to watch-making, and although he had long ceased to perform the manual part of his art, he had not forgotten it. A gentleman gave him a card of introduction to a firm he knew, and when he, Marie and their friends, left the hospitable Maison, he said that if only he could get work, he would strive to help those who had sheltered his child, and to make a home for his wife against she escaped from Paris.

Scarcely had he uttered these words when he was joined by young Merric, who accompanied him, almost in silence, to Denmark Street. When they

arrived at the lodging, Madame Le Beau invited them all upstairs, and Marie forgot her grief for her mother in her childish joy at seeing her friend Adèle and Mr. Merric together, close by the shining table he had presented. It was quite astonishing what progress they had made in their respective languages, and when Madame Le Beau complimented Mr. Merric on his French, he pointed to Adèle, and with a blush, said, "J'ai à — à — I have to — remercier—thank—mademoiselle."

"To tank my daughter! Oh, but it is you we tank!" cried Madame Le Beau, enthusiastically.

Then Mr. Merric and Adèle between them managed to make Altmann understand that he, Merric, would accompany him to the address given by Mr. George Moore, on the morrow, as he was acquainted with the firm.

It chanced that the head of the firm knew Altmann by reputation, and engaged him at once; so that he was able to take a small furnished lodging for himself and Marie, not far from Madame Le Beau's, Marie continuing her service at Mr. Pargitur's.

"Three shillings a week now. Sixpence extra for stopping Almar Edwin's mouth; worth it," was Miss Pargitur's fiat.

"Maria Amelia can parlez-vous it famous. That'll be worth more to me than my empty room and odds and ends of meat," remarked her father.

That room was occupied for about a fortnight by the poor exiles, during which period a waitership at an hotel was found for the father, who had been the principal of one at Paris. He also procured a lodging within a stone's throw of the butcher's shop, and looked from his garret with a sort of reverence down upon his benefactor's dwelling.

It is scarcely necessary to say that he, Altmann, and Madame Le Beau spent all they could afford of their small earnings at Pargitur's, where they had been benefited, while others of their compatriots followed their example. As time rolled on, therefore, Maria Amelia had plenty of opportunity of "airing" her French, and Marie was frequently seen seated at her side with the baby in her lap, prompting when necessary. But she soon learnt not to hazard a word until asked for it; for such was Maria Amelia's self-confidence, that she preferred stumbling through her difficulties her own way, to being preceded by any one else.

Marie had enough on her hands and mind at that period of her life. Her daily prayer was for her mother, her desire for her father. To reach their poor lodging before he returned at night, and to leave it hand-in-hand with him in the morning, was her object and happiness on the week-day, and to induce him to accompany her to the French services at the mission-room on Sunday evening, was the

aim of her Sabbath. He, like too many of his countrymen, was a freethinker; she, poor child, had never thought at all on sacred subjects until she fell into trouble and was led to read the Holy Scriptures to Madame Mercier, and to hear the missionary expound them. She became convinced that they alone could "make her wise unto salvation," and she asked God to open her father's heart, by His Holy Spirit, to receive a similar conviction. To please her he went to hear the gospel in its simplicity and purity, and afterwards, to please himself, he attended also the meetings opened for the benefit of the sceptical, in which questions were debated which concern the vital interests of every human being. Suffice it here to say that he was one of the many who were enabled, finally, to bless the Lord who led them to see the truth through much humiliation and trial; and to thank Him for putting into the hearts of His servants to seek out the perishing, whether native or foreigner.

Spring and summer saw him and his child still in England, but brought no news of Madame Altmann. Letters were written in vain, even when the war was at an end. They had nothing to do but to work, wait, and pray. One Saturday afternoon, when the day's labours were over, Marie prevailed on her father to retrace with her the way she had taken when she came from London Bridge to Soho,

for she remembered every step of it. They were now respectably if plainly dressed; for Altmann's employers found his services so valuable that they paid him accordingly.

"This is the lamp-post where I met Monsieur Brun," began Marie, when they reached the square. "It was here, dear father, that I uttered my first real prayer."

"It has been answered, my darling. I now acknowledge that prayer unlocks the gates of heaven," replied Altmann.

"It was beneath this direction-board at this corner that the crossing-sweeper performed his somersault in return for my ten sous," continued Marie as they proceeded, laughing merrily at the recollection. "Good Monsieur Brun has interceded for him at some home they have here for gamins, and he will perhaps be adopted. Adèle says he is still where I found him."

The boy was, in effect, at Holborn Circus when they reached it, and although it was a dry, bright day, and sweeping not very necessary, he still held his broom in one hand and his forelock in the other as he ambled across before them.

"Tere, my dear boy; remember you me?" said Marie, seizing him by the hand when they had reached the pavement, and placing a long-hoarded sixpence within it.

A FAREWELL GIFT.

"My eye! yer ave recovered your speech! Here's a go!" he cried, with an inimitable caper. "Where have yer a been ever since I purtected yer?"

"My fader," was Marie's reply, as she passed on.

She pointed out Mr. Merric's shop—closed early, as it was Saturday—and such other points as were of personal interest, and they finally reached London Bridge. She saw her friend, the policeman, on his beat, and arresting him, placed in his hand a small pocket-testament, with the words, "Tank you." He recognized her, and smiled; but the crowd soon separated them. When they reached the landing-stage, she and her father stood to watch a vessel that lay alongside, landing passengers. They heard French spoken; and Altmann accosted the speakers as soon as they came near. One of them, an emaciated-looking man, said he had come over from Paris in search of friends; that he had been there through the war and siege, and was penniless. Altmann asked his name, and if he had heard of Madame Altmann.

"Le Beau; Alphonse Le Beau. The shop of the Altmanns is still in the Faubourg St. Honoré, but under another name," was the reply.

Marie uttered such a cry that all the bystanders turned to look at her. She whispered to her father that it was the husband of Madame Le Beau—it

must be; and entreated him to take the omnibus, and to restore him quickly to her. He did so at once, telling the man to come with him, and to give his valise to the conductor.

Few words were spoken until they all reached Denmark Street, where Marie ran upstairs to prepare her friends for a surprise. Her excited manner was preparation enough; but when she said, "We have found Monsieur Le Beau," the effect may be imagined. At first it was not all pleasure; but when the wan, famine-stricken man followed Altmann into the room, the past, whatever its faults, was forgotten, and Madame Le Beau and Adèle clung to the bewildered husband and father with a passionate joy that foretold forgiveness and reunion.

"God be praised, we have united them!" said Marie, as she and her father stole away and returned to their lodging.

Here another surprise awaited them. They found a letter on the floor, pushed, apparently, under the door. Marie picked it up, and seeing the direction, threw her arms round her father, with the words, "Oh, mon Dieu! it is the writing of my mother."

And so it was. When they were sufficiently calm to open it, they found that Madame Altmann had only received her husband's last communication, which she had answered at once. "Thanks to English bounty," she said, "she had survived the

war and famine; but she had rather wished to die, since she had lost her husband and child. However, her friends had acted for her, and when peace was restored, had re-opened the shop under her maiden name. Their losses had been great, but not irretrievable; and she entreated her husband to return at once to Paris, and resume his business."

This was indeed good news, for which Altmann and Marie thanked God on their knees.

The remainder of this history is soon told. Marie and her father did not return to France until they had in some degree repaid the benefits they had received in England. Madame Altmann, in her gratitude for her child's safety, scraped together all the money she could possibly save or gather from relatives to enable them to do this. Marie was to discover what Madame Le Beau would like best; and to endeavour to gratify her wishes. She found that her friend had no desire to return to France, but would be quite happy if le cher vaurien, son mari, could procure occupation. He was consulted, and his one idea was a grocery in the French quarter of London. With the aid of the missionary, a very small shop was taken in Soho, and stocked with French and English saleable articles. Thither the Le Beaus went, installed by Marie; and hence, in after years, Marie received many letters from her friends, all of which tended to show that the

precious jewel adversity had purchased reformation for Monsieur Le Beau, who not only became steady in business, but joined his wife and mother-in-law in their religious observances. Adèle, as the reader has already suspected, became, in the course of time, Mrs. Merric.

Marie had the satisfaction of leaving Maria Amelia sufficiently advanced in French to transact business with her French customers; and Madame Le Beau promised to complete her education. A handsome gold watch-chain came, in course of time, for Mr. Pargitur; and no one was forgotten who had been kind to Marie. When she and her father took leave of the missionary, it was agreed amongst them that whenever mission-work brought him to Paris—as it soon actually did—he should make his abode in the Faubourg St. Honoré.

The next time that Marie found herself at London Bridge, it was to embark for sunny France. She and her father were surrounded by the friends of their exile; and many tears were shed at parting. Her last words to Madame Le Beau were, "Thou hast been my mother here; but my other mother waits me there. Adieu. Au revoir!"

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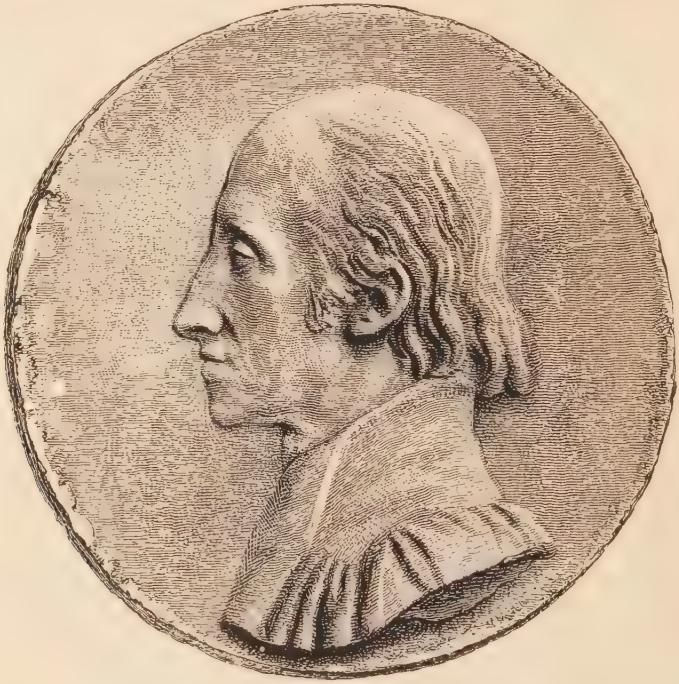

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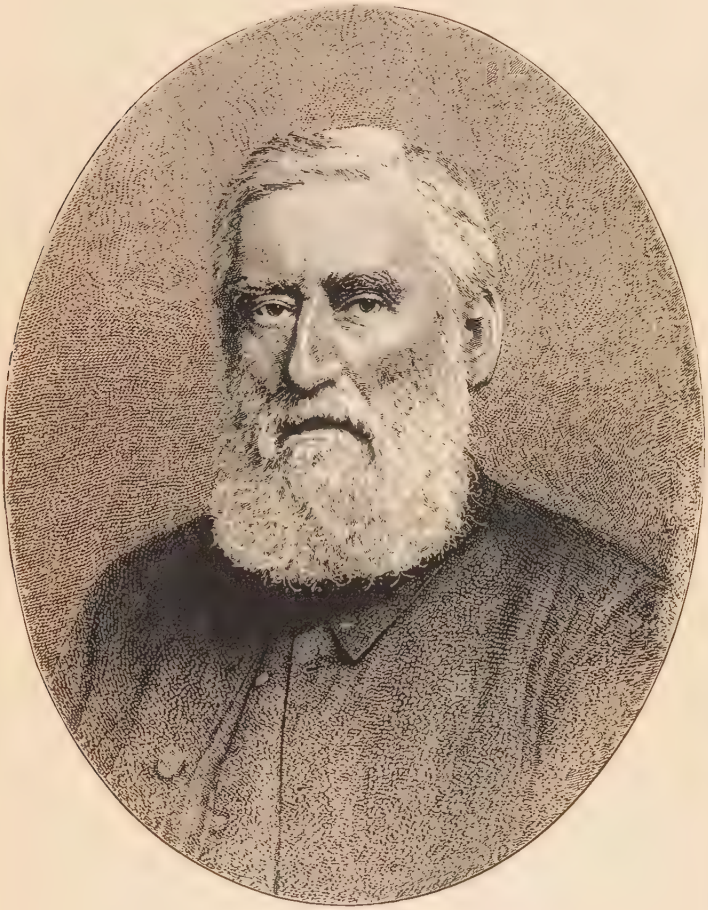

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